

OUT & About



The Pacific Region
Outreach Newsletter



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Upcoming Themes:

Summer — Water
Fall — Fire
Winter — Elected Officials
Spring — Invasive Species

Sacramento NWR Auto Tour

Balancing public use with wildlife protection

By Denise Dachner

It was a sunny, calm day with a brilliant blue sky — excellent for wildlife viewing from the Sacramento NWR auto tour.

"Looks like the visitors are behaving today," I said to Resource Assistant Dan Mallia.

"Yes, everyone is staying in their cars. They aren't even hanging out the doors or riding on their hoods!" he exclaimed.

This was rewarding to see since, over the past few months, he and another assistant had spent many hours talking with visitors about the ethics of wildlife viewing on our auto tour route and how wildlife can be disturbed by improper behavior.

VISITOR USE PROBLEM

Change is sometimes difficult, especially if it involves restrictions; yet the increasing disturbance by wildlife watchers had to be addressed. Their annual visits to our refuge doubled to 80,000 in the last 13 years, with the



majority occurring from November through January — also peak usage times for wildlife.

A certain amount of wildlife disturbance is accepted as a tradeoff for people's education and enjoyment. But when people walk on restricted levees to get a closer view or scare waterfowl so they can see them flying, human disturbance has reached an unacceptable level. Our old "Hints for Wildlife Viewing" signs were not working: It was clear that visitors did not understand the impact their actions were having on the wildlife.

See SACRAMENTO ... Page 12

Making the Vision Happen

Refuge visitor service requirements are updated

By Doug Staller

"We will make refuges welcoming, safe, and accessible, with a variety of opportunities for visitors to enjoy and appreciate America's fish, wildlife, and plants."

*Vision for People,
from Fulfilling the Promise*

During the last 50 years, the number of visitors to national wildlife refuges has jumped from 3.4 million to over 34 million, a more than ten-fold increase. Visitors include a wide array of people, from school children, photographers, and community groups to hunters, anglers, wildlife watchers, and other recreationists. How do we provide

quality experiences and services for such a diverse array of visitors?

In 1984 the Fish and Wildlife Service identified 10 "Public Use Minimum Requirements" to begin addressing this challenge. These requirements evolved from an effort initiated in Region 1 to identify public use needs and provide a basic level of service to meet these needs.

The requirements have been applied in a variety of ways across the Refuge System. Some regions have conducted regular "minimum requirement reviews." In such cases, professional staff from regional

See MAKING ... Page 4

Out & About is published quarterly for Region 1 Fish and Wildlife Service employees.

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SUBMISSIONS

We welcome your submissions to **Out & About**. Regular sections in the newsletter are:

- Feature Articles
- Case Studies
- Outreach Accomplishments
- Trainings & Workshops
- Announcements
- Q & A
- Letters to the Editor
- Outreach Resources

Articles should be submitted by E-mail or 3-1/2 inch floppy and run 150 to 500 words. Gear writing to newsletter style; avoid technical jargon. Photos welcome. Publication is not guaranteed, though every effort will be made to use submissions.

Submit articles to Jeanne Clark:
Stone Lakes NWR
1624 Hood Franklin Road
Elk Grove, CA 95758
Phone: 916/775-4421
Fax: 916/775-4407
E-mail: jeanne_clark@fws.gov

SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Spring	April 1
Summer	May 15
Fall	August 15
Winter	November 15

Out & About has received U.S. Department of the Interior and Fish and Wildlife Service DI-550 approval.

It is the policy of the U.S. Department of the Interior to ensure that individuals are not denied employment opportunities or program delivery because of their race, color, age (40+), sex (gender), national origin, religion, physical or mental disability. Unlawful discrimination in any form is strictly prohibited by agency policies and should be reported to the Fish and Wildlife Service Region 1 Equal Employment Opportunity Counselor, Office for Diversity and Civil Rights, 503/231-2081, 911 NE 11th Ave., Portland, OR 97232-4181.

REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Fisheries Programs Being Discovered!

New programs respond to high visitor demand

By Dan Diggs

There's no denying it! Fisheries programs have been discovered! The public is using, learning from, and appreciating fisheries facilities, projects, and programs more than ever before. And we've responded.

Providing quality customer service to our visiting public is a top priority. Developing these relationships offers opportunities to share conservation messages and enhance public appreciation for protecting the unique aquatic resources that surround us.

Federal fish hatcheries are not only tourist destination centers in many communities, but also leaders in school districts and colleges by providing innovative environmental education programs.

Demands for more tours and facility use have both increased dramatically in the past five years. Leavenworth National Fish Hatchery jumped from an annual visitation of 25,000 in 1995 to 125,000 in 2000. Dworshak National Fish Hatchery, and hatcheries located along the scenic Columbia River Gorge and on Washington's Olympic Peninsula, have all become education and outreach centers, serving their communities and thousands of visitors traveling nearby highways.

So, what is the draw? One of the answers is that people of all ages are eager to learn about nature in ways that were not available before. Learning is no longer just associated with classrooms and books: It has become interdisciplinary and "edu-taining."

Our programs actually assist educators in meeting their required state environmental

education mandates. Teacher workshops led by our information and education specialists bring science to an understandable level for all.


This hands-on experiential approach to learning occurs in many ways. "Kids in the Creek" programs put people in waders to explore aquatic life in local streams. Established curriculums, such as Projects WET, WILD, and Learning Tree, challenge teachers across many school districts.

Fisheries volunteer programs include community service clubs leading salmon restoration efforts in local creeks on our facility lands. Special events, such as open houses, National Fishing Week activities, fishing days for those with disabilities, and Native American programs, bring thousands to our facilities.

Spring Creek Hatchery offers salmon spawning demonstrations. The Entiat Hatchery is a stopping point for a community bike race. The Coleman Hatchery presents staff and teacher workshops on site. The Winthrop Hatchery serves seventh graders with the Watershed Watchers program on site. Carson Hatchery's Outdoor Classroom Experience, guided visitor weekends, and the annual Salmon Festival in Leavenworth are all located at our stations.

Hatcheries don't just raise fish and refugees don't just raise wildlife. The public is encouraged to visit, learn, and use our facilities as educational and recreational resources to be shared with the community.

This issue of *Out & About* includes some excellent examples of how we are building community relationships, nurturing stewardship for our natural resources, and creating opportunities for our constituents to feel pride in and be involved with their public lands.

When providing visitor services, let's show them that *service* is an important part of our agency's name. 

Dan Diggs is the assistant regional director for Fishery Resources.



Photo by: USFWS

Kids Fishing Day and other activities occur at many national fish hatcheries.

Volunteers Key to Education Program

Providing environmental education — without a full time staff

By Sandy Rancourt

Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge has had some form of environmental education for most of its existence. In its early days, environmental education was very informal and only a handful of schools and civic groups visited annually. As the population around the refuge grew at a rate of 15 percent per decade, so did the demands on the staff.

INITIAL PROGRAM

Recognizing both the need for a more formal approach and the limitations of staffing, the refuge settled on a self-conducted program. The staff and volunteers converted an old shop into a classroom, acquired animal mounts and equipment, and developed displays and a narrated, automated slide program. We used workshops to show teachers ways to incorporate refuge resources into their classes. With limited staff or volunteer assistance we offered this program, with some changes, to about 2,500 students annually until 1995.

NEW APPROACH

In 1996 the Friends of Turnbull NWR was formed, bringing with it over \$80,000 in grants to develop new curriculae. A contract coordinator developed and facilitated field trips and outreach programs. With help from numerous volunteers, this program reached nearly 15,000 students over the next two years.



Students use dipnets for aquatic studies at Turnbull NWR.

When the grant was spent, it was not possible to keep the full-time coordinator. Refuge staff could not meet the demand that the program had generated. Teachers had also grown accustomed to the high level of service and were reluctant to return to a self-facilitated program.


VOLUNTEERS HELP

Today the refuge largely meets this demand with a year-round program facilitated by Americorps members, Student Conservation Association (SCA) volunteers, student interns, and other volunteers. A staff member oversees the volunteers and program as one of many assignments. When Service funding is available (mostly through challenge grants), we hire a volunteer coordinator. Our Friends group provides the stipends required by the Americorps and SCA programs, when funds are available.

During spring, trained facilitators lead student field trips, classroom, and

outdoor activities on the refuge. In the summer we offer many outdoor activities to the general public. Our fall program, "Earth and Sky," exposes students to native cultures. During winter, we give hikes and five, age-specific classroom presentations to regional schools. Environmental education facilitators also participate in fairs, expos, and public meetings throughout the year.

Given the unstable funding and need to constantly train new staff, it is difficult to maintain a consistent, high-quality program. To address this, we will hold eight volunteer training sessions using trained Americorps members and a respected teacher who funded this training effort with a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant.

It is our hope that this will generate long-term commitments from volunteers to help maintain this important program. 

Sandy Rancourt is a supervisory park ranger at Turnbull NWR.

"With help from volunteers, this program reached nearly 15,000 students..."

Public is Visiting Hatcheries

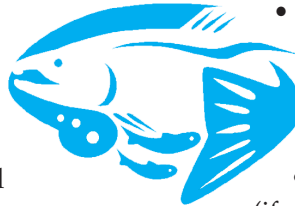
Use these ideas for publicizing your events

By Cheri Anderson

The saying goes “If you have it, they will come.” Recently, two Columbia River hatcheries proved that hatchery visitation is alive and well by hosting a number of very successful events.

In early September Carson National Fish Hatchery hosted back-to-back events. On September 8 they offered their second Disabled Access Annual Fishing Day. Twenty-five adults with disabilities enjoyed fishing, educational activities, miniature golf, and more. The next day, 167 kids were treated to the same activities at the second Annual Kids Fishing Day.

On September 23 more than 300 visitors took advantage of Spring Creek NFH’s Annual Open House, where they learned about and viewed salmon spawning, made fish prints, and took tours of the hatchery.



Neither of these hatcheries is located in a heavily populated area. How did they get the public to come? Here are some winning suggestions:

- Send news releases to local newspapers and other publications.
- Announce events on your community website, newspaper, or television calendars.
- Get your local radio station to feature your event.
- Post flyers at local post offices (if allowed), grocery stores, libraries, conservation districts, park offices, schools, chambers of commerce, and other businesses.
- Send flyers home with elementary school children.

Cheri Anderson is an information and education specialist at the Columbia Gorge Information and Education Office.

Making...

Continued from Page 1

offices or field stations helped refuge or hatchery staffs to identify areas of need where they could focus available resources.

According to Sheri Fetherman, chief of education and visitor services in Region 6, “Evaluations of visitor services requirements are key to determining how well a field station is currently administering its visitor services program. The evaluations provide solid direction regarding where they should be heading with their program. In our region, we have begun to conduct these evaluations before starting the CCP process, which provides the staff with excellent information for developing the CCP.”

When the vision for the refuge system, *Fulfilling the Promise*, was completed, a priority recommendation was to update these requirements. The priority public uses specified in the Refuge Improvement Act also made it clear that some revision was needed. A team of regional and Washington Office employees familiar with using the requirements convened and drafted new requirements and a reviewer’s handbook.

The shift in name from “public use” to “visitor services” also reflects a changing attitude in the Refuge System. According to Tom Worthington, chief of refuge operations in Region 3: “For many years, we allowed the public to use refuges and that was about as much as we thought about it. ‘Visitor services’ reflects a much more proactive approach.”

The draft policy chapter listing these requirements also specifies the need to track how well refuges are meeting them. An appendix to the chapter will contain a handbook that can help identify issues that require action. It will serve as a tool for evaluators and a reference for refuge staffs.

The new requirements should help us focus energy on programs and facilities that will assist in maintaining a consistent level of services for visitors and communities at most refuges throughout the system. They will also help us remember that *people* are an important part of our mission.

Doug Staller is the acting chief of the Division of Visitor Services and Communications.

Upcoming Events

International Migratory Bird Day

When: May 12

Where:

Klamath Falls, OR

Contact:

Steve Hayner/BLM

541/883-6916

Walk on the Wildside

When: May 12

Where: Elk Grove, CA

Contact: Jeanne Clark

Stone Lakes NWR

916/775-4421

jeanne_clark@fws.gov

International Migratory Bird Day

When: May 12

Where: Alviso, CA

Contact: Sharon Lee

Don Edwards

SF Bay NWR

408/262-5513

sfbay_urbanrunoff@

yahoo.com

Spring Wings Bird Festival

When: May 11-13

Where: Fallon, NV

Contact:

Janet Schmidt

775/428.6452

janet_schmidt@fws.gov

www.springwings.org

The News Release 🔍

Follow these rules to get your story used

By Joan Jewett

News releases are one of the most important ways to communicate with the media. That's why it's so important to write releases that are clear and concise. Here are some things to consider when writing news releases:

Reporters usually receive many news releases in a day — dozens of them at big outlets. They must sift through them quickly, looking for the best story. If your release takes too long to make its point or makes the reporter work too hard to understand it, it won't be pursued.

The reporter is your audience. You are not writing the news release for the public. Some small rural newspapers will run a news release verbatim but most newspapers won't. The point of the release is to get *the reporter* to follow up on your story.



If you have controversial information, come right out and say it. Don't be vague or leave out information because you hope to avoid a sensitive issue. Most reporters are going to ask you probing questions anyway. Reporters become mistrustful of agencies and representatives who gloss over the facts. Be forthright. Don't think that if you avoid bringing it up, they won't ask. They will.

Don't raise more questions than you answer. Forget about trying to be provocative and including "teasers" that you don't explain so the reporter will call you. Chances are, they won't.

A good news release follows the inverted pyramid form. The most important and interesting news goes in the lead, or opening

sentence. Additional information follows in order of importance, with background information and more detail coming further down in the story.

The lead and first paragraph are the most important. They are what will get your news release read or tossed in the garbage. This means you must write a sentence that works hard, imparting the most critical news clearly in the fewest words. A good journalistic rule of thumb is: Never write a sentence longer than 25 words.

Make sure the lead actually contains news. The news isn't that the Service is releasing a report or has made a decision; the news is what the report says or what was decided. Make sure it contains useful information. Don't count on the reporter to call you or go to the website to read the document. Even if they do, they will report their interpretation of the materials. You've lost an important opportunity to get your message across.

Avoid using bureaucratic terms and excessive qualifiers, especially in the lead. For example, a news release should never start, "The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, acting pursuant to Section 4D of the Endangered Species Act, today imposed regulations that" Instead, say something like "The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service today adopted a special rule allowing" Then explain the 4D rule a few paragraphs later in the news release text.

Define all Service terminology. If you must discuss "take," simply define it. You don't need to use the full legal definition that appears in the ESA. Just say "take is defined as killing or harming a protected species or significantly altering or destroying its habitat."

The Service's Public Affairs Office in Washington, D.C. is updating its manual on news releases. As soon as it's ready, I will share it with you. Until then, I hope the above pointers will help you prepare news releases that are easier to write and easier to understand.

Joan Jewett is chief of Public Affairs.

*"Don't be vague
or leave out
information
because you
hope to avoid a
sensitive issue."*

O

Student Training at Refuge and FWS Lab

College-sponsored program relies on real field experiences

By Cathy S. Johnson

"The six week program aims to stimulate and enhance interest in attending college and pursuing science careers."

As an Environmental Contaminants Division employee and a graduate student at the University of California, Davis (UCD) in chemical ecology, I get the chance to participate in many rewarding activities. My Service job includes a lot of interesting field work, from candling California clapper rail eggs in tidal marshes to evaluating contaminant concerns for land acquisitions.

Last summer my college department (Environmental Toxicology) was asked to participate in the Junior Academic Science Research Achievement Program (JASRAP). JASRAP is an early outreach program designed to inspire talented students from under represented segments of the population and low-income backgrounds to achieve high educational goals. The six week program for 25 students aims to stimulate and enhance interest in attending college and pursuing science careers.

Because of my FWS background, I was asked to mentor two students regarding toxicological research. I agreed to show them how to collect biological samples in the field and perform toxicity tests in the lab.

I met Amna Howatky and Jamailya Grey and discussed their goals for the program. We decided to evaluate the effects of molinate, an herbicide used in rice fields, on crayfish. Nearby Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge provided an ideal place to collect test organisms.

On a mild summer day, Refuge Biologist Mike Brady and Assistant Refuge Manager

Beatrix Treiterer met me, the JASRAP students, and two undergraduate researchers at the refuge. Each of us put on a pair of hip boots.

Then I talked briefly about how to wade in water wearing hip boots and walk in mucky mud. I followed up by demonstrating the most efficient way to net crayfish and where to sample.

All of the students caught on quickly. After two hours of mud bug sampling, we were treated to a refuge tour and had a picnic lunch on the refuge's new wildlife viewing platform. Lunch talk included an overview of refuge management goals and programs.

We transported the crayfish back to the lab. The first thing I did was train the JASRAP students in chemical laboratory safety. Then we exposed the crayfish to molinate, evaluated their herbicide levels, dissected the crayfish, and analyzed the internal organs for molinate using a high-pressure (performance) liquid chromatographer.

In just a few days the JASRAP students went from hip boots and dipnets to metabolism chambers and expensive analytical equipment!

At the end of the program JASRAP students gave a presentation about their experiences to their families, JASRAP students, mentors, and others. The most rewarding part of my students' presentation was when Amna spoke of Stone Lakes NWR and repeatedly thanked me for introducing her to the wildlife aspect of toxicology.

Amna and I remain in contact via email. I gave her high school science club a slide presentation about the plants and animals we protect under the Endangered Species Act, winning lots of points for the posters, pencils, folders and other wildlife goodies the Service provided.

The experience was so rewarding that I plan to participate in this outstanding outreach program again, this summer.

Cathy S. Johnson is a fish and wildlife biologist in the Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office.



Photo by: USFWS

After collecting organisms, the group enjoys a refuge tour.



Conservation through Public Use

Visitor Services programs can advance our conservation mission

By Rick Coleman

As neighborhood fields are developed and urbanized, there is an ever-increasing public demand for open space activities, primarily on "public" lands. The Fish and Wildlife Service has recognized this demand by focusing on six wildlife-oriented public uses (interpretation, environmental education, wildlife photography, wildlife observation, hunting, and fishing). As field stations attempt to weigh visitor services in respect to conservation programs, it can be easy to focus on their cost or conflict with conservation efforts, and to overlook their benefits.

The truth is that well-crafted public use programs can and should complement and enhance our conservation endeavors. If we turn our back on the public, how can we hope to sustain these conservation efforts? Without active public support, public agencies fall further behind in meeting their core responsibilities. This can lead to a downward spiral of disappointment and disregard.

By contrast, quality public use experiences can improve understanding of and appreciation for agency goals and programs and fulfill expectations. Several examples are included in this issue of *Out & About*.

The key here is to link a quality outdoor experience with knowledge of the factors that contribute to that experience. When people

say that they want their grandchildren to enjoy the same experiences they have enjoyed, it is not enough to just provide the experience: We must also teach them what is necessary to create the experience and to sustain it so it can be enjoyed once again.

For this to happen, our public use programs should be accompanied by effective interpretive messages and adequate supporting information.

To draw from marketing terminology, "branding" is a popular term for linking public recognition of a vendor with a product. We need to "brand" awareness of and support for wildlife conservation by providing positive experiences through our visitor services programs.

The refuge mission of placing "wildlife first" doesn't mean "visitors last" or "visitors never." "You can protect and enhance the resources requiring our stewardship and develop a well-planned visitor services program that complements your conservation efforts. This investment will pay off because the greater the quality of our visitors' enjoyment, the more lasting the benefit for all of our conservation programs and endeavors."

Rick Coleman is the assistant regional director for External Affairs.

*"Well-crafted
public use
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TRAININGS & WORKSHOPS

Migratory Bird Education for Educators

Acquire strategies, skills, and tools to help educate about migratory birds, such as bird identification in a conservation context. Explore many resources, practice activities, and participate in both classroom and field sessions.

When: July 10-12

Where: Keystone, CO

Contact: Sharon Howard at 304/876-7494

FWS Internet Developers Workshop

This is the first of two new web-related workshops. Learn the latest FWS applications of web and internet technology, software, and how to streamline web design and management. Bone up on FWS policies. Learn email techniques. Find out about advanced graphics methods.

When: July 11-13; register by May 11

Where: Shepherdstown, WVA

Contact: Mark Richardson at 304/876-7470

Public Use Planning and Interpretive Principles and Methods

Learn basic public use planning and interpretive principles. Develop skills in writing objectives and designing effective publications and how to plan for, produce, present, and evaluate interpretive signs, exhibits, and techniques.

When: August 13-17

Where: Nisqually NWR, WA

Contact: Sharon Howard at 304/876-7494

NAAEE Conference

The thirtieth gathering of environmental educators will offer more than 300 concurrent sessions, from workshops and symposia to hands-on and research sessions. Many opportunities to network. See www.naaee.org

When: October 11-15

Where: Little Rock, AK

Contact: csmith409@aol.com or 202/884-8912

The Word on Promotional Items

Are yours useless trinkets or targeted outreach?

By Susan Saul

"People who are genuinely interested in what you have to offer will not need a trinket to convince them to talk to you."

External Affairs has been receiving a lot of calls from field stations looking for promotional items that they can give away at sportsmen shows, home and garden shows, fairs, and other large commercial events.

These "trade shows" can be a great way to reach new audiences and also a way to spend a lot of money with little return.

When surrounded by commercial exhibitors using every approach possible to attract booth traffic, it's tempting to feel that your Service exhibit can't compete unless you have giveaways, too. Some companies even gauge their success by how much stuff they've given away. The truth is, trinkets are not a substitute for talking with people. And people who are genuinely interested in what you have to offer will not need a trinket to convince them to talk to you.

You should even be judicious about providing handouts. A study done by the Trade Show Bureau says 60 to 85 percent of them are thrown out!

Giveaway items definitely have a niche in exhibits. They should be tailored to the audience and provide appropriate information about the Service.

To be a successful exhibitor you should train your people and prepare in advance. Exhibit at shows that are attended by the people you want to reach. Know your messages and train exhibit staff to be comfortable discussing the messages.

When someone stops at your exhibit, engage them in meaningful conversation. Find out about their interests and needs. Listen to what they say. Offer the brochure, poster, video, or other outreach item only after determining there is appropriate interest or a need.

This way, your giveaway will amplify and reinforce the messages communicated by the exhibit and your conversation with the person long after the show is over. **O**

Susan Saul is an outreach specialist in External Affairs.

Procurement Rules Restrict Giveaways

The Fish and Wildlife Service has policy that restricts the purchase and use of promotional items (Service Manual 304 FW 1). Federal agencies may not use appropriated funds for personal gifts. Without explicit or implied statutory authorization, promotional items are regarded as unlawful gifts regardless of their value.

Promotional items are usually inexpensive giveaway objects intended to promote a particular place, program, event or idea. They typically are imprinted with a logo and name, address, phrase, or slogan of little or no informational or educational value. They have a strong gift connotation. Examples include pencils, key rings, refrigerator magnets, balloons, and coffee mugs.

By contrast, informational and educational materials are items that convey significant information about Service

programs or that contribute to an overall educational program with specific behavioral objectives. Examples include books, brochures, posters, coloring books, teachers' guides, and videos. An item such as a sticker, lapel pin, book cover, binder or placemat that is an integral component of a well-designed informational program may be acceptable even though it would be classified as an improper gift if given away to the public on a less restricted basis.

Some expenditures that resemble personal gifts, such as coffee and cookies for an open house or other special event, can be purchased (\$25 limit) when necessary to carry out the agency's purposes.

Questions? Contact Dan Snider, purchasing agent in the Division of Contracting and General Services, at 503/231-2032.

Public Goes for Klamath Birding Event

Tips for making a first-time event a success

By Kathy Larson and Akimi King

When the Fish and Wildlife Service was invited to join Bureau of Land Management staff at a round table meeting to host Klamath Falls' first outdoor International Migratory Bird Day celebration last May, it was "all systems go" from the start. The group enthusiastically seized the opportunity to help their community learn about songbird migration, bird feeding and landscaping, and wildlife conservation and gleaned valuable lessons to use while planning our 2001 IMBD celebration.

We held our first event at Moore Park, located on Oregon's Upper Klamath Lake. Excited birders watched western grebes dance in pairs across the water's surface against a backdrop of snow-covered mountains. Lakeside tree swallows swooped above the crowd, and amazed onlookers by landing on bird houses the children had just made!

Nearly 300 people attended, an excellent response for a small community. We built interest by featuring lots to see and do, including live hawks and owls, birdhouse construction, face-painting, bird walks, local artists, Celtic and folk music, vendors, and educational displays.

We drew heavily on the community to provide help and publicize the event. Lions Club members worked with the Southern Cascades Woodworker's Guild and Reach, Inc. to provide lumber and help kids build nesting boxes. Lions members also grilled hamburgers and made lunches, while Girl Scouts sold hot popcorn from a machine lent out by South Valley Bank. A Gottschalk's employee did facepainting, and a local wildlife rehabilitator brought raptors and a feet/feather display.

Numerous other organizations and individuals lent their talents, including local birding clubs, a native plant society, natural history and museum groups, merchants, artists, musicians, and a nationally recognized taxidermist.

We also held a raffle during the event that netted over \$200. To keep

nature on everyone's mind all year long, we donated the money to the county library to purchase birding books and nature videos.

How did we make our first event such a big success? Here are some suggestions:

- Start planning early.
- Establish a steering committee to help do the work.
- Get support from management. This will cost time and money!
- Recruit community volunteers to provide talent and publicize the event. Be sure to include educators.
- Offer a variety of activities to encourage the public to attend.
- Use already-developed resources, such as educator packets, and IMBD event guides.
- Use a wide variety of media to reach diverse audiences (television, radio, newspapers, newsletters, calendars, announcements at meetings, posters, magazines, etc.)
- Be ready for unexpected changes: Two weeks before the event, the city told us we could not use the park we had initially chosen. We had to scramble to find a new site and notify everyone.
- Give lots of recognition and thank-yous. Remember, people who feel appreciated are more likely to help out again!

Kathy Larson is a volunteer for the FWS and BLM and Akimi King is a fish and wildlife biologist in the Klamath Falls Fish and Wildlife Office.



Kids loved the hands-on raptor display.

Aleutian Canada Goose Festival

When: May 23-25

Where:

Crescent City, CA

Contact: 707 465-0888 or

1-800-343-8300

soar2@northcoast.com

www.delnorte.org/soar

National Fishing and Boating Week

When: June 1-10

Where: Nationwide

Contact:

www.nationalfishingandboatingweek.org

Return of the Terns

When: June 24

Where: Alameda, CA

Contact: East Bay

Regional Park

510/521-6887

www.ebparks.org

Washington Water Weeks

When: September 1-October 14

Where: Statewide

Contact: Washington

Dept. of Ecology

360/943-3642

New Outreach Listserv

Our National Conservation Training Center and the Division of Refuges have joined forces to sponsor fws-voices, a new listserv that offers a chance to learn and share ideas on many outreach topics. VOICES is an acronym for visitor outreach, information, communication, and education services.

The new listserv serves as a clearinghouse for education and outreach questions and answers. It features training courses, distance learning events, and special broadcasts. It also includes programs, events, and other activities of interest.

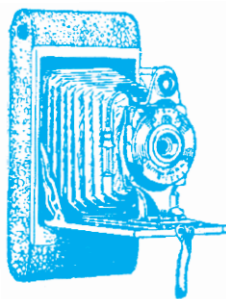
To subscribe via e-mail, click on "New Memo." After "To," type listserv@www.fws.gov. Leave the "Subject" line blank. In message area, type subscriber fws-voices Your Name. Click to send.

Grant Deadline

Do you have an idea for linking your field station to a natural area, historic site, park, or other open space? This is another great way to expand a public use program.

Eastman Kodak Company will be accepting applications for the Kodak American Greenways Awards program until June 1, 2001. Grants of \$500 to \$2,500 will be awarded in the early fall.

For more information, go to www.conservationfund.org, click on American Greenway, then Kodak Award. Or call Leigh Anne McDonald at 703/526-6300.



Shutterbug Alert!

Looking for a way to drum up interest in your field station and the Refuge System Centennial? Do you know photographers with the right stuff that deserve recognition?

Help get the word out that the National Wildlife Refuge System and the North American Nature Photography Association are cosponsoring a call for photographs to be used to create a commemorative Centennial Calendar in 2003.

The images must fit into one of three categories: wildlife/plantlife, habitat, or people.

The image must have been taken at a national wildlife refuge or wetland management district managed by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Professionals and amateurs must have entries postmarked no later than October 1, 2001. One time usage fees are paid as follows: \$200 for large, full page monthly image; \$100 for small image; and \$350 for cover photo.

For submission guidelines see <http://refuges.fws.gov/centennial/calender.html> or contact Karen Hollingsworth at 207/726-3931 or karen@threeblackducks.com

Reasonable Accommodation

Don't forget our visitors with disabilities when planning special events. Previous issues of *Out & About* have offered suggestions for modifying facilities and programs to provide comparable experiences for disabled visitors.

Special event announcements should identify a specific contact person and phone number to arrange accommodations for those with disabilities who wish to participate.

If you have a flyer, please use the following information: "Persons with disabilities who require accommodations should contact [insert name/phone number]. Sign language interpreters will be provided upon request."

For publications, please add "This publication will be made available in alternative format upon request, please call [name of local person/phone number] or 1-800 (State Relay Number)."

Also add: "Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from the programs and activities of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is available to all individuals regardless of age, race, religion, color, sex, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, status as a parent, protected genetic information. Please direct any questions to the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20240."



Four-of-a-Kind in Las Vegas

New foundation helps four federal agencies

By Callie Le'au Courtright and Alan O'Neill

Just beyond the glittering nightclubs of Las Vegas lies an unparalleled environment of another kind. From lush alpine forests to the dry Mojave desert, seven million acres of spectacular natural landscapes surround Las Vegas.

This immense area includes the Desert NWR Complex (USFWS), Lake Mead National Recreation Area (NPS), Spring Mountains National Recreation Area (USFS), Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area (BLM), and three million acres of other public lands.

THE CHALLENGE

The federal lands surrounding this popular tourist destination are important to the Las Vegas Valley and the world of science. However, several factors challenge the ability of these four agencies to provide enduring, high-quality stewardship of these resources.

Limited agency staff, the pressures of the population explosion, increasing visitor volume, and urbanization present seemingly insurmountable obstacles. Deteriorating infrastructure, outdated facilities, and cutbacks further hinder their mission.

These problems have been heightened by a lack of understanding, appreciation, advocacy, and involvement within neighboring southern Nevada communities.

THE ANSWER

In 1998 the four agencies began to work collaboratively to develop a unique approach and new type of partnership.

From these discussions came the idea of a single private, nonprofit foundation that would help all four agencies provide for the long-term protection and appropriate use of their lands.

The effort gave birth to the Outside Las Vegas Foundation (OLVF).

Serving as the principal point of contact and coordination for the four agencies, the OLVF works with the citizens, the business community, and local governments to develop partnerships to support the adjacent federal lands.

In its brief history, OLVF has already been successful in garnering community support. Many local leaders stepped forward at the outset to serve on the board of trustees and foundation committees, and to donate money to support building the foundation.

Recently OLVF accepted a check for \$25,000 from Lake Las Vegas community, a new housing development, with even larger donations in the works. The foundation also received a \$300,000 matching grant from the Hewlett Foundation for start up.

Modern Las Vegas is moving away from its "sin city" reputation, and OLVF is an opportunity for the hospitality and gaming industries to support local natural resources, as well.

Most important, the foundation's mission to preserve surrounding federal public lands, enrich the visitor experience, enhance the quality of life for residents, and promote community stewardship embraces many of the public use issues of concern to the agencies.

The foundation's earliest focus will be on developing volunteer and environmental education programs, in order to cope with the increasing visitor volume and demand for programs.

The foundation has already brought together key people from the four agencies to discuss ideas and the feasibility of sharing training and curriculae.

Individually, the BLM, NPS, USFWS, and USFS would have been hard pressed to come up with this type of reliable, well-funded support organization. Instead of competing with each other, OLVF offers a nonpartisan, collaborative environment that serves all of the agencies.

The Outside Las Vegas Foundation is also helping the community see that the federal agencies managing the area's natural resources are truly Las Vegas' best four-of-a-kind.

Callie Le'au Courtright is an outdoor recreation planner at Desert National Wildlife Refuge Complex. Alan O'Neill is the executive director of Outside Las Vegas Foundation.

"An early focus will be on developing volunteer and environmental education programs..."

Sacramento...

Continued from Page 1

*"It was clear
that visitors did
not understand
the impact their
actions were
having on
wildlife."*

CREATING NEW SIGNAGE

We didn't want to close the area to visitors. After long discussions with refuge and EPIC staff, we formulated a plan. First, four cartoon-like signs were set at strategic points on the six-mile auto tour, where visitors were commonly seen walking off the tour.

Then we designated two Park & Stretch Areas, already popular viewing sites, where visitors were encouraged to get out of their vehicles.

Some visitors really appreciated the friendly, entertaining signs. Others ignored them thinking they were "just for fun."

To encourage compliance, at the beginning of the auto tour we added a regulatory sign that clearly states that visitors must stay in their vehicles except at designated areas.

INSERTS AND RADIO RECORDING

Many visitors asked "Why do we need to stay in our vehicle?" To address this, we created an insert for our wildlife check list and station brochure. The insert explains how the construction of loafing islands, vehicle turn outs, mowed viewing lanes, and other improvements creates good wildlife viewing opportunities for people *and* undisturbed areas for wildlife.

To further enhance the viewing experience, an Eagle Scout candidate developed an audio tour that was professionally narrated. Now visitors can tune their radio to FM 93.1 and hear about the refuge and wildlife lore.



Photo by: Denise Dachner

Well-placed loafing islands reduce disturbance and offer excellent wildlife viewing.

We also plan to add a welcome sign, possibly to replace the regulatory sign. And we'll count on the likes of Dan Mallia and volunteers to boost compliance by personally greeting tour visitors and explaining the viewing and radio tour opportunities.

As I peered through the spotting scope on the viewing platform, I could see two cars, with visitors inside, at a turnout. They were viewing a Virginia rail as it probed in the mud just 20 feet away! "Wow," I thought to myself, "having people stay in their vehicles really provides a better experience for wildlife and visitors alike!"

Denise Dachner is an outdoor recreation planner at Sacramento NWRC.



Printed on recycled paper

RESOURCES: Displays, Exhibits, and Publications

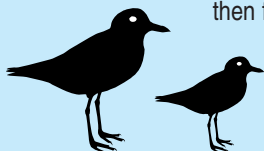
National Fishing and Boating Week

National Fishing and Boating Week is right around the corner, from June 1 through 10. You can register your event online or get help with event planning. Their website will be featured on national radio and Parade magazine - a great way to get publicity for your event. Get ideas or register your event at www.nationalfishingandboatingweek.org

Directory of Birding and Nature Festivals

You're probably familiar with the American Birding Association and partners' *Directory of Birding and Nature Festivals*. Now you can register your event online. Go to

www.americanbirding.org and click on the events calendar, then follow the directions regarding how to list your festival. Questions? Contact Lina de Gregorio at edcon@aba.org.



Kids' Stuff

Looking for some freebies to beef up your environmental education program? Our own Service website has some great, downloadable handouts for kids. Check out "Fish, Wildlife, and People: A Mark Trail Coloring Book" (36 pages) and the Wetlands Coloring Book (24 pages). There are also endangered species resources, from games to slideshows. Go to www.fws.gov and click on Educating for Conservation, then Kids Page.

"Friend"-ly Resource

Watch for the new publication "*Building Your Nest Egg - An Introduction to Raising Funds for National Wildlife Refuge Support Groups*." Published by the National Wildlife Refuge Association in collaboration with the Service, this publication has recently been distributed to refuge support groups nationwide. For more information, contact Tina Dobrinsky at 703/358-2303.